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Double Modals in the British Isles: Scotland and Northern England

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyse the accepted double modal combinations in the British Isles found in the literature. The paper begins with the collection of different syntactical analyses suggested by well-known researchers that have analysed the non-standard feature of double modals. Considering that the second modal is the true modal verb, those researchers propose different syntactical functions for the first modal. Furthermore, the geographical distribution of double modals is a crucial aspect to take into account when talking about double modals. The main findings suggest that double modal combinations are only found in Scotland and the North of England and that the most common double modal combination is *might could*. Nevertheless, double modals are a non-standard feature that might end up disappearing because they are poorly used.

Key words: modal verbs, double modals, multiple modals, Scotland, North of England, might could.

1. Introduction

Dialects might differ in some of the grammar features encountered in Standard English (SE). One of those features is double modals (DM) or also known as multiple modals (MM). In Standard English, only one modal per sentence is accepted, and so if two modal verbs occur together the sentence will be considered ungrammatical. However, it does not occur in northern dialects in the United Kingdom (UK) such as Scotland, where two modal verbs can occur in the same sentence. It is important to remark that in Standard English the combination of a modal, and a semi-modal, *might be able to*, is grammatical but this paper is not going to consider semi-modals due to its acceptability in Standard English. This paper is only going to focus on true modals such as, *might*, *may*, *can*, *could* and *will*, among others.¹ The research questions of this paper are:

- (i) Which English dialects allow the feature of DM?
- (ii) Are all DM combinations accepted?
- (iii) If so, which is the acceptability among dialects of each combination?

This paper is structured in five different sections. The first section is the literature review that collects all the information about the origin and location of DM. After contextualizing this feature, the main locations of DM are contrasted and at the same time, the most common combinations are charted. The last part of the literature review is the introduction of fourth major pieces of research on the different syntactic analyses of DM that have been proposed in the literature. The second section is the methodology that I follow in order to obtain, develop and discuss all different information found in

¹ Although triple modal combinations do exist among modal verbs, this paper is not going to consider them, but it might be interesting to introduce this term that might be useful for further research on the topic.

the literature. The third section is the results. It includes two tables. The first one charts all different DM combinations in English dialects in the United Kingdom found in the literature. The second table is about the frequency and modernity of these constructions. The fourth section is the discussion about the results encountered in the literature. Finally, the last part, which is the fifth section, is the conclusion of this paper.

2. Literature review

2.1. Historical development of modals

‘Modality cycle’ is a term mentioned by Fischer (2004) that exposes the evolution of modals from Old English until present-day English. All modal verbs currently encountered in English grammar are different from the ones that existed in the Old English period. Modal verbs do not convey lexical meaning. The aim of modal verbs is to modify the main verb they are preceding so the function of the modal verbs is the same as auxiliaries. During the Old English period, some of the present-day English modals were core modals, which implies that they had lexical meaning. “*Sceal* was still also used in the sense of ‘to owe’, *willan* in the sense of ‘want, desire’, *mot* in the sense of ‘to have power, to have the opportunity’” (Fischer, 2004: 17). Core modals could also acquire different morphological forms and they occupied the same syntactic positions as full verbs.

2.2. Epistemic vs. Deontic modals

Modal verbs might belong to different categories depending on the meaning they express. Kemenade (1989, cited in Fennell, 1993) proposed two different categories, epistemic modals and deontic/dynamic modals. Table 1 exemplifies these two categories proposed by Kemenade (1989). The former are characterized by their

auxiliary function, in other words, they are true auxiliaries and in a syntactic analysis, they should occupy inflection (INFL). The latter are called differently depending on the author. They can be deontic or dynamic modal verbs or modal verbs with root meaning. “Deontic or dynamic modal verbs behave more like a full verb” (Fennell, 1993: 432).

	EPISTEMIC	DEONTIC/DYNAMIC
Meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility - Probability - (un)certainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability - Volition - Permission - Obligation - Advisability
Modals	<p style="text-align: center;">Might May Must</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Can Could Would Should Will</p>

Table 1: Categories of modals, epistemic and deontic, and its meanings. Based on Elsmann and Dubinsky (2009: 75-76).

The distinction between epistemic and deontic modals will be essential to compare the possible modal combinations. According to Fennell (1993), modal combinations of an epistemic modal and another epistemic modal are not possible in English, whereas, combinations of epistemic modals and deontic modals are possible in English.

2.3. The origin of double modals

The origin of DM is uncertain. Not many authors have researched about this topic and the few ones who have investigated it do not agree with the origin of DM. There are two main hypotheses proposed by different authors. DM might be borrowed from Scandinavia or inherited from Old-English:

The most persistent double modal constructions in English are of the *shall* + *OTHER MODAL* type, and the first attestations are from late Old English, making them contemporary with Viking contact. Given the intensity of contacts between English and Scottish dialect speakers and the Nordic invaders and settlers from the

eighth century on, we can speculate that constructions such as *shall can* and *shall may* develop under the influence of Scandinavian. (Fennell, 1993: 433)

The main regions where double modals are used are Scotland, Northern England, Ireland and Southern United States. “The existence of double modals in both Scottish and American Southern vernacular suggest that they have a common origin” (Nagle 1997: 1514). In addition, DM are a special construction of the working or poor class. Standard English does not influence those inhabitants and for this reason, they can still use this particular old construction.

2.3.1. Old English, Middle English inheritance

Some authors speculated on the idea that DM were inherited from Old English or Middle English because there is some evidence that some DM existed at those periods. For instance, Nagle (1995) argues that only one DM combination was found in Middle English, which was *shall may*. This might reinforce the idea that DM originated in Old English and Middle English but then, attesting all current double modal combinations in the North of England and Scotland, none of them corresponds to *shall may*. Hence, Nagle (1995) does not agree that DM are an Old English or Middle English inheritance. On the contrary, “Kemenade’s analysis therefore presents us with the possibility that double modal constructions persist in some dialects as a development of the older system that allows two modals together, provided that one is a full verb” (Fennell, 1993: 433). Therefore, among authors there are different points of view about the origin of DM.

2.3.2. Scandinavian borrowing

Fennell (1993) highlights that Northern British and Scottish English might not be the source of DM construction. One reason might be that there is a lack of DM when considering the existence of this construction at the first periods of the English

language. This might lead researchers to think of another possible origin of DM. Back in history, Scandinavians occupied mainly Scotland and North of England. Scottish and English have some connections with Scandinavians because they borrowed some lexicon from Scandinavians. Another association with these three regions is DM. Fennell (1993) states that “multiple modal constructions are more common in Scandinavian than in English”, so it cannot be assured that DM were a feature of the English language; the existence in Scandinavian might lead researchers to consider this possible borrowing.

2.4. Combinations of double modals

The most common combinations might differ according to the region where they are attested. This section is a compilation of the accepted combinations with emphasis on Scotland and the North of England, and, briefly, the most frequent ones in Southern United States English. Those regions have common language features because as Montgomery and Nagle (1994) suggest Southern United States have some similar language features due to Scottish and Irish influence during the immigration.

2.4.1. British English

Scotland and the North of England are the principal regions in the United Kingdom where English speakers might occasionally use DM. The decrease of the usage of DM in Scotland and the North of England is a current issue because most of the citizens do have contact, at some point, with Standard English. There is evidence that DM are obscure among teenagers and young adults because some of them consider DM ungrammatical and unacceptable, “[...] only 9.37% of a sample of 16-17-year-olds [...] found the same sentences either ‘natural’ or ‘familiar’, whilst 90.63% found them ‘alien’ ” (Beal, 128: 2004).

Table 2 exemplifies the most common combinations in Scotland and the North of England:

	SCOTLAND	NORTH OF ENGLAND
DECLARATIVE	might could might can might would might should will can would could	might could will can would could
NEGATIVE	would never could might no could	would no could mustn't could
INTERROGATIVE	Will can?	

Table 2: Double modals in Scotland and North of England. Based on Kortmann et al. (2004).

In Scotland, there are more DM combinations than in the North of England. The most frequent one is *might could* and the most archaic one is *will can*. These two combinations are found in Scotland and the North of England. All combinations found in the North of England are also found in Scotland, but the main difference between Scotland and the North of England is that all DM combinations in the North of England must follow the pattern MODAL 1 + CAN / COULD. That is, the second modal in the North of England must be *can* or *could*. By contrast, Scottish English accepts *would* and *should* as second modal verbs. It is important to highlight that both dialects have different negative combinations. Modal verbs can express negative meaning by using negative adverbs (*never*), the negative particle (*no*) or the contraction of *not*. Considering the examples of Table 2, the negation particle follows the first modal, thus the previous examples show that it is more frequent to negate the first modal. Finally, in order to form a question, the first modal is the one that is inverted.

(1) Wi his sair foot he **would never could** climb yon stairs.

(Example from Purves 1997: 57, cited in Miller, 2004: 53)

(2) He **might no could** do it.

(Example from Miller, 2004: 54)

Being aware of the combinations accepted in declaratives, negatives and questions is important to use DM while speaking. For example, the most frequent declarative DM combination is *might could*, but in questions, inverting *might*, the sentence would be ungrammatical.

(3) They **might could** be working in the shop.

(4) ***Might** they **could** be working in the shop?

(Examples from Miller, 2004: 53)

The combination *will can*, inverting *will* instead of *can* might be considered an exception because most authors agree that the second modal needs to be inverted.

(5) He'll **can** help us the morn/tomorrow. (Example from Miller, 2004: 53)

(6) **Will** he **can** help us the morn/tomorrow? (Example from Miller, 1997: 120)

This exemplifies why the most frequent declarative combination would be ungrammatical if *might* is inverted in questions. Considering that *will can* in questions is an exception, all other combinations always invert the second modal, for this reason, *might could* in declarative would be ungrammatical if the first modal is the one inverted in questions.

2.4.2. American English

According to Hasty (2012), Southern United States English (SUSE) have its own DM combinations. Some of these combinations are not found in Scotland and the North of England but other are shared among those dialects.

might can	must can	may can
might could	must could	may could
might should		may will
might will		may should
might would		

Table 3: DM combinations in Southern United States

Table 3 shows that the Southern United States dialect allows more combinations than the Scottish and Northern English varieties. *Might could* is the most frequent combination in SUSE. First modals are *might*, *must* and *may*, which are epistemic modals, and the archaic combination, *will can*, found in Scotland and the North of England is not found in the SUSE dialect. In questions, the second modal is the one inverted, never the first modal verb.

2.4.3. Comparison

After having introduced the three main dialects that allow DM, this section is going to attest which double modal combinations are found in each dialect. Some combinations are shared among all dialects but others are unique and so not allowed in another dialect. Table 4 shows the most common combinations found in the literature and compares the existence of those combinations in Scotland, the North of England and Southern United States.

	Scotland	North of England	Southern United States
might could	✓	✓	✓
might can	✓		✓
might would	✓		✓
might should	✓		✓
might will			✓
will can	✓	✓	
would could	✓	✓	
must can			✓
must could		negative ✓	✓
may can			✓
may could			✓
may will			✓
may should			✓

Table 4: Comparison of double modal combinations

As can be seen in Table 4, DM are more common in Southern United States and Scotland than in Northern English. However, there are many few combinations in the North of England. In addition, it is difficult to conserve DM due to the fact that not all English speakers use this construction.

2.5. Syntactic analyses

2.5.1. Battistella (1995)

Battistella (1995) defends the idea that DM are made of a false modal or spurious modal, which is the first modal, and the true modal, which is the second one. One of the arguments that he exposes defending his idea is that modals invert in questions and tag formations, and the reason why the first modal cannot be the inverted element is because it is an adverb.

(7) **Could** you **might** possibly use a teller machine?

(8) You **might could** do that, **couldn't** you?

(Examples from Battistella, 1995: 23-24)

For instance, in the combination *might could*, the function of *might* corresponds to the same as that of the adverb *maybe*. This theory has some disadvantages considering negation, because it is mostly placed between the two modal verbs.

(9) I expect that we **might could** get you one by Friday.

(Example from Battistella, 1995: 26)

(10) I expect that we **maybe could** get you one by Friday.

(Example from Battistella, 1995: 27)

(11) They **might not could** have gone over the state line to get her.

(Example from Battistella, 1995: 25)

Battistella (1995), who quoted Jackendoff's (1972) research about adverbs, states that adverbs can be I(nflection)P adverbs or V(erb)P adverbs. The adverb in (12) modifies the entire clause and is, hence, an IP adverb, while the adverb in (13) modifies the verb phrase only and is, therefore, a VP adverb.

(12) Management **reluctantly** will curtail spending. (IP adverb)

(13) Management will **reluctantly** curtail spending. (VP adverb)

(Examples from Battistella, 1995: 29)

Therefore, if the adverb is placed before the modal verb, it modifies the entire clause. By contrast, if the adverb is placed between the modal verb and the main verb, the adverb only modifies the VP. Nagle (1994) suggests that *might* is an epistemic modal and he emphasizes the order epistemic + root.

2.5.2. Nagle (1997)

Nagle (1997) also agrees with the idea of the order of DM as EPISTEMIC + ROOT. He states that there is no difference in meaning with the placement of negation.

(14) I **might shouldn't** worry about it, but I do.

(15) He **may not even can** get out [of] the parking lot.

(Examples from Nagle, 1997: 1515)

The modal negated in example (14) is the second one, whereas in example (15) it is the first modal that is negated. The meaning of the sentence would not change if the modal that is negated were the opposite one. He also defends the idea that the second modal should be the one that is inverted, although occasionally both modal verbs invert in questions.

(16) **Might could** you give me a minute?

(Example from Nagle, 1997: 1516)

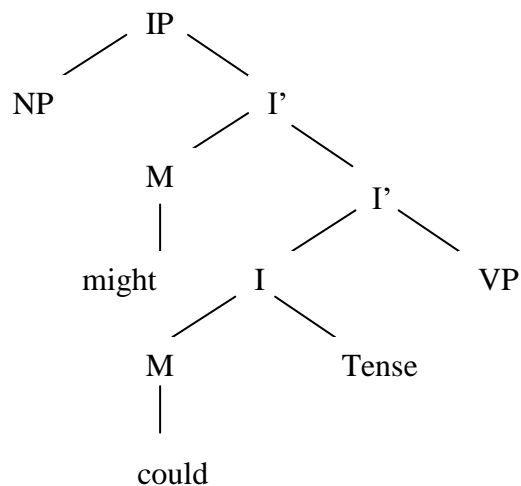
(17) **Could** you **might** give me a minute?

(Example from Nagle, 1997: 1515)

Example (16) shows that if both modal verbs are inverted in questions, the order of the modals does not alter. While example (17) shows that if only one modal is inverted, the second modal can only occupy this position.

The analysis he proposes is the following:

(18)



(Example from Nagle, 1997: 1521)

2.5.3. Elsmann and Dubinsky (2009)

MacDowell (1987) observed that ‘epistemic modals’ are polarity operators, which means that they give a positive or negative meaning to the sentence. Considering this, Elsmann and Dubinsky (2009) proposed a new way of analysing DM by using MacDowell’s (1997) observations. “P-modals head a PolP [...]. V-modals head a VP and they behave as Aux V” (Elsmann and Dubinsky, 2009: 75), this statement is the summary of the analysis they propose.

(19) [TP we [v **might** t1 [v **should**]]2 [VP t2 [PolP t1 [VP go in]]]]

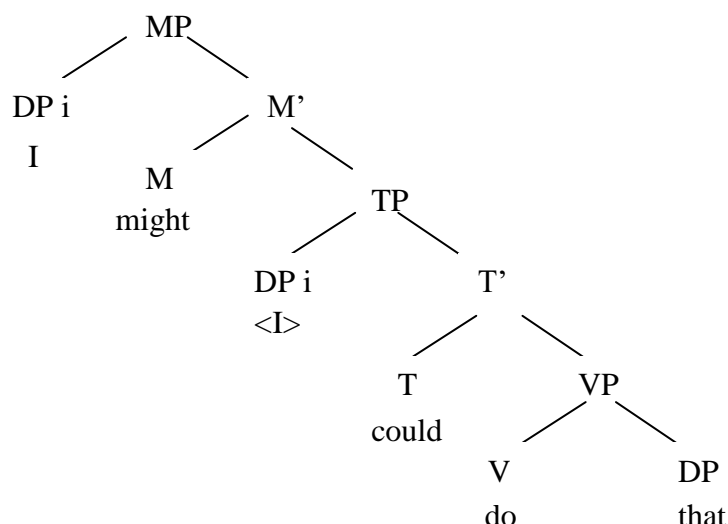
(Example from Elsmann and Dubinsky, 2009: 79)

Example (19) shows that DM are moved from a low position to a higher one in the TP domain. The first modal is part of PolP, which is a phrase inside the VP and the second modal belongs to the VP, which is the one that carries tense.

2.5.4. Hasty (2012)

Before doing his analysis, Hasty (2012) first discusses previous analyses realised by other researchers, such as Di Paolo (1989), Boertien (1986) and Battistella (1991, 1995). Hasty proposes a modal phrase (MP) analysis, which is one of the most recent analyses. He assumes that the second modal is the true one because it raises in questions whereas the first modal would be the head of a new phrase, namely a modal phrase (MP). Hasty assumes that the first modal does not carry tense and for this reason, the MP position is above the TP. The second modal is located under TP because it does have tense. However, Hasty (2012) suggests that some modals might carry tense by themselves; *might* and *could* express past tense while *may* and *can* express present tense. Therefore, if speakers know the tense of those modals, it is much easier to decide if they express present or past meaning.

(20)



(Example from Hasty, 2012: 1725)

3. Methodology

The purpose of this paper was to first consider the function of the first modal verb in DM combinations, and then attest all possible DM combinations found in the literature. All the literature considered in collecting all DM combinations was from authors and researchers that only considered the British Isles or that where considering and contrasting the DM combinations in the British Isles and the Southern United States.

All the articles studied are intended to be from different periods, in the interest of providing different and updated information about the combinations found among all speakers. As language and society are developing and changing, the importance of acquiring combinations attested over the years has made research more realistic. Although articles from the late 20th century have been taken into account when discussing about possible analyses, all the combinations found in there have been checked with articles from the beginning of the 21st century.

The purpose of not charting first the combinations accepted in the late 20th century was to make the chart more realistic in order to see which combinations can be

found in the different dialects of the United Kingdom, nowadays. The results part is going to be composed of two different tables that chart all the different possible combinations in each dialect. The second is going to focus on the most predominant dialect that acquires the feature of DM and at the same time, it is going to expose the frequency and variability of each of the combinations found in that dialect subsequently analysed.

4. Results

Tables 5 and 6 exemplify all the information encountered in the literature related to DM in the British Isles. Firstly, as it can be seen in Table 5, all the literature studied only provides examples of DM in the North of England and Scotland. Some DM combinations are more common than others, but all possible combinations are charted in Table 5.²

Secondly, Table 6 provides more information about the use of DM. Some DM are more modern than others, others are used more frequently and some DM are variants of older combinations. All this information is charted in Table 6.

² It has not been possible to attest the existence of double modal combinations in East and West Midlands, East Anglia, South and West Country in the literature studied.

	Northern English	Scottish English	Source
will can	X	X	Miller, J. (2004)
will could		X	Corrigan, K. (2006)
would can		X	Bour, A. (2015)
would could	X	X	Miller, J. (2004)
may can		X	Bour, A. (2015)
may could		X	
may will		X	
might can		X	Miller, J. (2004)
might could	X	X	
might would		X	Bour, A. (2015)
might should		X	Miller, J. (2004)
might better		X	Bour, A. (2015)
should can		X	Corrigan, K. (2006)
should could		X	Bour, A. (2015)
should ought to		X	
ought to should		X	
must can		X	
must could		X	
must would		X	

Table 5: Double modal combinations in the United Kingdom

		Old	Variant	Modern	Common	Occasionally	Rarely
First Modal	Second modal						
may	can		X		X		
	could		X		X		
	will			X	X		
might	better			X		X	
	can		X		X		
	could	X			X		
	should	X			X		
	would	X			X		
must	can	X				X	
	could	X				X	
	would	X				X	
ought	should			X			X
should	can	X				X	
	could		X			X	
	ought to			X		X	
will	can	X			X		
	could		X		X		

Table 6: The use of double modals

5. Discussion

The research carried out about the geographical location of DM in the British Isles ended up with a clear focus on the north. The main location of DM is Scotland. This acquires different combinations and usages depending on which part of Scotland the speakers come from, the north of Scotland or the south of Scotland. In the North of England, there is also some evidence that fewer DM combinations exist and they are used among its speakers, although DM are occasionally found in their speech.

Firstly, *will can*, *would could* and *might could* are the only combinations found during this research on the possible DM combinations in the North of England. These combinations confirm the previous hypotheses provided in the literature review that DM follow the pattern EPISTEMIC + DEONTIC, and so the second modal in Northern English combinations must be *can* or *could*. The most common combination is *might could* in the North of England and in Scotland. According to De La Cruz (1995), *might could* is the queen of combinations, “from the overall geographical distribution of double modals, that a reduced group seem particularly strong both in frequency and geographical occurrence. Two of these are recorded in every one of the dialects I have mentioned: *might could* and *might would*”. (De La Cruz, 1995: 80). Hasty agrees with De La Cruz (1995), “*might could* is considered to be the most commonly used double modal” (Hasty, 2012: 1717) and Battistella (1995) also reinforces this idea, “*might could* is the simplest and most general DM form, and I concentrate on it, looking later at variants such as *may could*, *may can* and *might can*” (Battistella, 1995: 22). Therefore, according to Battistella’s idea that *may could*, *may can* and *might can* are variables of the combination *might could*, it could be considered that the combination *would could* is probably a variable of the archaic combination of *will can*.

Secondly, Scottish DM combinations predominate among the combinations found in the Northern of England. As Table 5 illustrates all the combinations found are acceptable in the Scottish dialect but not in the Northern English dialect. 12 out of the 19 combinations are composed by *can* or *could* as the second modal. 16 out of the 19 combinations encountered follow the pattern EPISTEMIC + DEONTIC, except for 3 combinations that are composed by *better* or *ought to* which are supposed to be more modern combinations.. Therefore, *might*, *may* and *must* are first modals and *can*, *could*, *would*, *should* and *will* are, generally, second modals. Nonetheless, some exceptions may exist due to the development of dialects, “new data from the Scottish Borders provided evidence for profound changes, alongside the preservation of some traditional MM constructions” (Bour, 2015: 57).

Many previous studies such as Miller (1993) and De La Cruz (1995) coincide that Scottish English lacks *shall*, *may* and *ought*. However, recent research by Bour (2012) states that:

Crucially, the modals *may* and *ought* are now officially included in the syntax of new MM [multiple modals] constructions in Southern Scotland. This proves that dialectal rules enunciated over a decade ago cannot remain identical and the arrivals of new groups of people imply rapid changes in the vernacular(s) or dialect(s) of a community. (Bour, 2015: 56)

The new combination *should ought to* can be also encountered as *ought to should* even though the latter is very rare, as Bour (2012) suggests in his research. ‘*Will can*’ is an archaic and unique combination found in Scottish borders and the Orkney dialect, “there appears to be no evidence of double modals in Shetland and Orkney, with the exception of structures containing *can* in the sense of *be able to* in Orkney dialect” (Melchers, 2004: 40).

Most of the combinations in Table 6 have an old origin and some of them are not used nowadays due to dialects development. This development leads the introduction of

new modal verbs that were thought that they did not belong into, in that case, the Scottish dialect.

In terms of the negation of DM, the researchers considered in this paper do not have a strong argument that defends the most common ways to negate those modal verbs. DM are negated by the use of the negative particle *not* or *nae*, the adverbs *never* or *no* or the cliticization of the particle *not* to the first modal or the second modal. It has not been established yet which modal should be the negated one. In the literature, several examples negating the first or the second one can be found. Bour (2012) exemplifies that *won't can't*, *won't can*, *willnae can* are all possible combinations. Battistella (1995) also discusses negation in DM combinations and he found some data with the first modal negated and other with the second modal negated. These two options have been illustrated in (21) and (22) respectively:

(21) They **might not could** have gone over the state line to get her.

(22) I was afraid you **might couldn't** find this address.

(Examples from Battistella, 1995: 25)

As can be seen in Table 5, DM combinations are only found in the Scottish dialect and in the Northern English dialect. None of the other dialects in the United Kingdom contains this feature.

During the research carried out for this paper, many different articles have been reviewed in order to obtain some possible combinations in the rest of the United Kingdom but it has not been possible to confirm that DM are only accepted in the north. De la Cruz (1995) affirms that “the areas of the English-speaking world where double (or multiple) modals are found are Scotland, the Northumbrian borderline and Tyneside in the British homeland” (De La Cruz, 1995: 76). This might be the reason why I did

not find any DM combinations in the other English dialects such as the Midlands dialect, the Southern dialect, the Welsh dialect, East Anglia and the West Country dialect. It appears that “Scotland is probably the original homeland of double modals before these crossed over the Atlantic, the Scottish pre-eminence is beyond any doubt” (De La Cruz, 1995: 78).

6. Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to conduct some research on the non-standard feature of DM encountered mainly in the Scottish dialect. Regarding the existence of this feature in Scotland, the other dialects in the British Isles have been investigated in order to see if this feature also existed there. The results have been conclusive: the most predominant place in the British Isles where speakers used this feature was Scotland and the North of England. However, this feature has not been located in Southern dialects in the British Isles. Moreover, finding examples of DM in the Northern English dialects has also been difficult because it is a regressive phenomenon and the literature on the existence of this feature in the British Isles is scarce. One of the main problems of attesting DM is that they were rarely encountered in writing. This feature is common in speaking and for this reason, such data are not as easy to find in the written sources I had access to.

This paper has focused on British dialects only, but the lack of material has led me to also consider some literature of the United States, where DM are a common feature of Southern United States English. I thought that taking into account such information could be helpful to understand the phenomenon under study. Actually, considering, at some point of the paper, the Southern United States dialect has been useful to learn that DM were an English feature brought to the United States during immigration.

In terms of the syntactic analyses provided by different authors, Battistella (1995), Nagle (1997), Elisman and Dubinsky (2009) and Hasty (2012), I decided to take into account authors that I have seen that were relevant for other studies and that belong to different periods. They offer different analyses, but agree in that the second modal is the one that carries tense, not the first one. Therefore, the first modal could be considered close to an adverb rather than to a modal. Hence, it seems that the most probable analysis for DM is the one that introduces a Modal Phrase (MP) and inside the MP, a Tense Phrase (TP), as Hasty (2012) states. Furthermore, the consideration of the first modal as something close to an adverb could also be a plausible option to take into account when contemplating the possible function of the first modal.

To conclude, I think that further research on this topic would be interesting because DM are no longer extensively used among speakers from Scotland and the North of England, which means that this feature may end up disappearing in the near future. Actually, the fact that it has been really difficult for me to locate examples of DM and to establish the different DM combinations that are possible in the British Isles confirms such a claim. DM have been really studied in the United States because it is a more common feature among its speakers and so, more combinations are attested. Consequently, one possible way of understanding better a phenomenon that is disappearing in the British Isles might be focusing on Southern United States English in future research.

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Appendices

(A) **The Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English** (Available at: <http://ewave-atlas.org/parameters/121#2/-1.8/26.7>)

Variety	World Region	Type	Value
<input type="text" value="Search"/>	<input type="text" value="British Is"/>	<input type="text" value="--any--"/>	<input type="text" value="--any--"/>
British Creole	British Isles	English-based Creoles	D - attested absence of feature
Channel Islands English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
East Anglian English	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
English dialects in the North of England	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	C - feature exists, but is extremely rare
English dialects in the Southeast of England	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
English dialects in the Southwest of England	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Irish English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Maltese English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	C - feature exists, but is extremely rare
Manx English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Orkney and Shetland English	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Scottish English	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	C - feature exists, but is extremely rare
Welsh English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature

Table 7: The Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English by Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (FRIAS). Available at: <http://ewave-atlas.org/parameters/121#2/-1.8/26.7> Accessed 15th May 2016.

Variety	World Region	Type	Value
<input type="text" value="Search"/>	<input type="text" value="British Is"/>	<input type="text" value="--any--"/>	<input type="text" value="--any--"/>
British Creole	British Isles	English-based Creoles	D - attested absence of feature
Channel Islands English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
East Anglian English	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
English dialects in the North of England	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	C - feature exists, but is extremely rare
English dialects in the Southeast of England	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
English dialects in the Southwest of England	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Irish English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Maltese English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	C - feature exists, but is extremely rare
Manx English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Orkney and Shetland English	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature
Scottish English	British Isles	Traditional L1 varieties	C - feature exists, but is extremely rare
Welsh English	British Isles	High-contact L1 varieties	D - attested absence of feature

Table 8: The Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English by Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (FRIAS). Available at: <<http://ewave-atlas.org/parameters/121#2/-1.8/26.7>> Accessed 15th May 2016.

(B) Graphic of the growing of *might could* in writing (Available at: <http://english.stackexchange.com/questions/3211/is-might-could-a-correct-construct>)



Table 9: The growing of *might could*. Available at: <<http://english.stackexchange.com/questions/3211/is-might-could-a-correct-construct>>
Accessed 15th May 2016

(C) List of examples of double modals

(1) Wi his sair foot he **would never could** climb yon stairs.

(Example from Purves 1997: 57, cited in Miller, 2004: 53)

(2) He **might no could** do it.

(Example from Miller, 2004: 54)

(3) They **might could** be working in the shop.

(4) ***Might** they **could** be working in the shop?

(Examples from Miller, 2004: 53)

(5) He'll **can** help us the morn/tomorrow. (Example from Miller, 2004: 53)

(6) **Will** he **can** help us the morn/tomorrow? (Example from Miller, 1997: 120)

(7) **Could** you **might** possibly use a teller machine?

(8) You **might could** do that, **couldn't** you?

(Examples from Battistella, 1995: 23-24)

(9) I expect that we **might could** get you one by Friday.

(Example from Battistella, 1995: 26)

(10) I expect that we **maybe could** get you one by Friday.

(Example from Battistella, 1995: 27)

(11) They **might not could** have gone over the state line to get her.

(Example from Battistella, 1995: 25)

(12) Management **reluctantly** will curtail spending. (IP adverb)

(13) Management will **reluctantly** curtail spending. (VP adverb)

(Examples from Battistella, 1995: 29)

(14) I **might shouldn't** worry about it, but I do.

(15) He **may not even can** get out [of] the parking lot.

(Examples from Nagle, 1997: 1515)

(16) **Might could** you give me a minute?

(Example from Nagle, 1997: 1516)

(17) **Could** you **might** give me a minute?

(Example from Nagle, 1997: 1515)

(18) **might could** (tree analysis)

(Example from Nagle, 1997: 1521)

(19) [TP we [v **might**₁ [v **should**]]₂ [VP t₂ [PoIP t₁ [VP go in]]]]. We **might should** go in.

(Example from Elsmann and Dubinsky, 2009: 79)

(20) I **might could** do that.

(Example from Hasty, 2012: 1725)

(21) They **might not could** have gone over the state line to get her.

(22) I was afraid you **might couldn't** find this address.

(Examples from Battistella, 1995: 25)